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THE UNITARIAN

A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS

THESE ARE UNITARIANS
No. 12. Frances Rowe

Many readers to whom the voice of Frances Rowe is not unfamiliar on the radio, and even her appearance, in the case of those who possess a TV set, or who have seen her on the stage at one time or another, are aware that she is the daughter of the Rev. Mortimer Rowe, formerly Secretary of the General Assembly. Frances remains true to her Unitarian upbringing, although her professional career has cut her off from regular and frequent contacts with her fellow-Unitarians, but she is a member of Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Hampstead, where she worshipped with her parents in former years, and where she was married a few years ago to an actor as widely known as herself — Clive Morton — better known, indeed, than she, by virtue of his frequent appearance on the film screen as well as on stage and TV. Both were seen together as the Archdeacon and his wife in the recent TV series "The Last Chronicles of Barset."

Frances went to Channing School at the tender age of eight, being then the youngest boarder, and in that respect the "babe" of the school, she left it eleven years later, after two years as Head Girl, to complete her education at Newnham College, Cambridge. She valued and regularly attended morning worship at the Cambridge Unitarian Church. It was at the University that her acting ability came into prominence, leading to her being chosen to act the part of Cleopatra when the Marlowe Society decided to break the age-long tradition of casting male undergraduates for female Shakespearean parts. The Cambridge Amateur Dramatic Society followed their example in the next year. After securing a good Honours degree in English, Frances trained for what was now her chosen profession at a London Dramatic School. Then followed several years of exacting work in various Repertory Theatres, including some which were not too far from a Unitarian Church, such as Newcastle-on-Tyne, Nottingham and Coventry (until one of the blitzes destroyed the theatre there), in these periods she considerably widened her Unitarian acquaintance by worshipping with them when she could.

But before the war was over, repertory gave place to London engagements and a more settled career — so far as that of an actress can ever be settled.

Ten years ago her Unitarian acquaintance was vastly widened, geographically, when she was leading lady in a record American run of Bernard Shaw's "Man and Superman," first in New York and afterwards throughout the States, during which two seasons she visited numerous towns and cities and Unitarian Churches, from coast to coast, and was warmly greeted by our American Unitarian cousins. Since then her career has been confined to this country.

Off-stage Frances is incurably shy of public appearances, despite her experience of having been irresistibly drawn into them while in the U.S.A. She is, however, an active member of one or two money-raising committees of a philanthropic character, theatrical and other, such as the Deaf Children's Society. Last year she was elected, to her surprise and pleasure, an Associate of her old college — Newnham, Cambridge.

FORWARD TOGETHER

Several of our churches are engaged in, or contemplating, a special campaign in connection with the Forward Together Movement that aims at increasing the number of Unitarians by half before 1962. The Editor will be pleased to receive special progress reports of those campaigns already in action. Articles should not be longer than four hundred and fifty words. Below is a report received from the Rev. T. E. Dalton.

SEEKING GOD ON THE HIGH ROAD

A Forward Movement Campaign was held at Ilford Unitarian Church from late September to early December last year. The objects of the campaign were (a) To awaken the people of Ilford to the importance of religion in their lives; (b) To publicise our Church, our Faith and our activities; (c) To act also as a mission to ourselves; (d) To link the campaign with special anniversaries of the church.

These objects were set out in a series of clear cut aims and included in the programme.

The twelve meetings and All Faiths' Service fell into three main divisions. 1. The Eastern Religions the colour problem. 2. The problems of Youth. 3. Unitarianism. In each division was a "Public Conversation." Here speakers, under the guidance of the chairman, discuss a topic openly before the audience who join in the discussion later. These were most popular and accounted for 40 per cent. of all attendances. The World Congress of Faiths provided our speakers for the Eastern Religions and the Readers and Preacher for the All Faiths' Service.

A streamer 16ft. x 2ft. with chalice and caption only was displayed outside the church. A special campaign notice board 40ins. x 30ins was erected outside the church giving three weeks meetings in detail. Eight special bills were displayed in local buses throughout the campaign. The church notice board had a new title strip pasted on showing a "flaming chalice" and the Wayside Pulpit part of the board was used for posters covering the divisions of the campaign with weekly changeable titles. Inside the entrance to the hall was a board displaying the next week's meeting.

Two local newspapers circulate in Ilford. The Editors of both were interviewed, supplied with literature and each week were provided with a 200-word report of the meetings and sermons. No press advertising was undertaken, the policy being to arouse their news interest and no

heir commercial interest. We received almost continuous press publicity from September until after the 50th Anniversary Service on January 4th. The Minister's opinion was also sought and published on a matter of local interest.

How far were the objects of the campaign attained? (b), (c) and (d) were most handsomely achieved. (a) is of course not easy of assessment and will not be really evident for some time to come. There have been newcomers to the church and some are fairly regular attenders and participate in our other activities. One point on which all our members are agreed is that it was all well worthwhile. Running a campaign, however, is like those sports in which you have to hit or kick a ball. You must keep your eye on it the whole time—and—it is the FOLLOW THROUGH that counts. Ours is taking the form of "public conversations" and discussions begun in February.

P.S.: The campaign cost £40.

VISION

By T. J. Jones

There is an ancient saying which we do well to note very carefully indeed, in these times of ours: 'Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). I say it should be noted very carefully, because the operative word used is 'vision"; and there are far too many people (Unitarians included) who behave as though the word used is "television" . . . "Where there is no television, the people perish." Television is regarded as the sign and *sine qua non* of real life: with it, you are in the procession; without it, you perish, socially at any rate.

Hence the feverish rush to "keep up with the Joneses," and the modern rash of aerials . . . a new sort of "Sign of the Cross" (of varying form) peculiar to our age. And with these go new rites and rituals which bid fair to oust the traditional church worship. One daily paper speaks of the "Sunday evening rite," "the congregation settling down to one of life's reassuring certainties," "the ceremonial as unchanging as an Order of Service," "turning down the lights to a dim religious intensity" in the "temple of entertainment."

Now, it must be conceded and faced that television has come to stay; and, when colour comes to be added, as it will in due course, its staying power will be enhanced and enlarged. This is as it should be, since television is truly a marvellous invention, offering a wide field of education, instruction and legitimate entertainment when wisely used; which even the "Joneses" value! But let it not swamp time and culture, and creative activities . . . and the church.

"Television" is not synonymous with "Vision" . . . the awareness of the Eternal, of the Kingdom of God, of Ideals and the Things that Should Be, for which a Church stands and calls for support; and woe betide those who mistakenly equate and confuse them.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

HUCKLOWITIS

Raymond came to me one day.

"Uncle George," he said, "what's a Hucklowite?"

"A Hucklowite?"

"Yes. Mr. Jones was talking about it last Sunday."

"Well," I said, "a Hucklowite is a person who becomes, you might say, a friend of Hucklow by helping it over money difficulties during a particular period."

"How d'you mean, Uncle George?"

"You've heard about the improvements and rebuilding? They will cost a lot of money, which *is* available. But the Homes are running at a loss because people are not using them as much as they might and the money isn't coming in as well as it did.

"Yes, but what about the Hucklowites?"

"I'm coming to them. Now, obviously, *that* will take a considerable time; and during that time money has to be found to keep the Homes open. So Mr. Tittle has worked out a scheme."

"Uncle Henry has?"

"Er—yes. You see, if 2,000 people can be found who will be willing to make a gift to the Homes of 5s. a year for five years, that will bring in £500 each year until things are on their feet again."

"In five years?"

"We hope so."

"2,000! That's a lot of people."

"Yes; and the more the merrier. Furthermore, those who can't manage a 5s. unit are invited to give part of a unit: 1s. 3d., 2s. 6d., 3s. 9d. Quite a few of us will be contributing."

"What about me? Can I?"

"I don't know. Perhaps; if you are willing and can afford it. Or several of you together. See Uncle Henry when we go with the school and see what he thinks."

"And then I'll be a Hucklowite?"

"You will."

"Oo—smashing!"

BOOKS BY THE WAY
by John Rowland

I am grateful to *The Unitarian* for being given the opportunity to discuss, every few months, some worthwhile books that have come my way. They will not be discussed at length — space will not permit that — but it is possible that what I have to say will give readers some ideas for their library lists. I do not propose to write only about religious books, though books on religion will, of course take a prominent place.

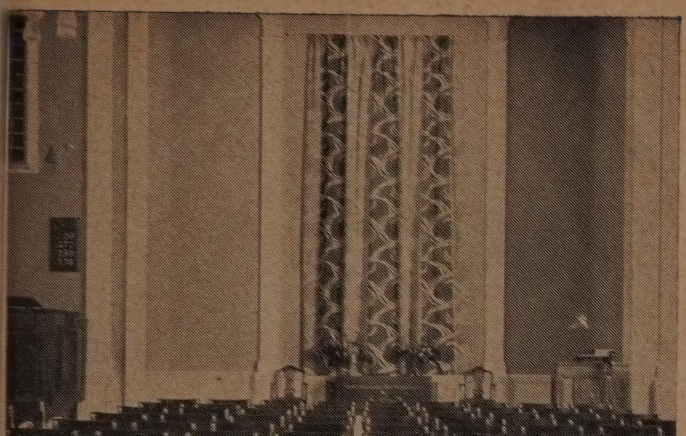
There can, to my mind, be no doubt at all about the most important book that I have recently read. That is *The Sleep Walkers*, by Arthur Koestler (Hutchinson, 25s.). This is a long and learned discussion of the way in which men look at the universe; it is also a plea for better feeling between men of science and men of religion. To people who know Mr. Koestler as a novelist (his famous book, *Darkness at Noon*, was published in 30 different languages!) it will come as a surprise; but it is certainly a fine book which will be read with pleasure by thousands.

This year is the bicentenary of Robert Burns. This has, naturally, produced many books. Those who are not Scotsmen find the overwhelming enthusiasm of Scots for the poetry of Burns a little difficult to understand. Maybe some understanding will come, even to the Englishman, if he reads *Brithers A'*, by Peter Esslemont (George Ronald, 10s. 6d.), which is an attempt to evoke the living personality of the poet. Mr. Esslemont tries to show the way in which Burns set out his heartfelt belief in human brotherhood.

The Invading Gospel, by Jack Clemo (Bles, 10s. 6d.), is a very odd book, but a book which will attract many readers. Mr. Clemo is a novelist and a poet, and he has written in this volume a curious mixture between spiritual autobiography and religious argument. Religious liberals will not agree with all he has to say, by any means, but all who are interested in religious problems will, I know, find him stimulating, even when they disagree with what he is saying.

Finally, just a word about *Georgian Chronicle*, by Betsy Rodgers (Methuen, 21s.). This is an interesting footnote to Unitarian history. It is built around the life and character of Mrs. Barbauld, a famous writer of Victorian days, and it deals most interestingly with the Warrington Academy, and the brilliant and learned circle who worked there.

Four books, then — all of some interest in their own way. They are a very mixed bag, but that, I hope, is as it should be. I expect to have more to report in three or four months' time.



RE-OPENING OF CROSS STREET CHAPEL

The Re-opening Ceremony and Service of Dedication at Cross Street Chapel took place on March 31st. The new building was packed when the Ceremony of the Key took place at the main door. With appropriate words the architect handed the key to the chairman of the trustees, who, in turn, handed it to the chairman of the congregation. During the service the Invocation was spoken by the Rev. A. W. Vallance, President-elect of the General Assembly, and the Act of Dedication by the Rev. Principal F. Kenworthy, former minister of Cross Street Chapel.

The Rt. Hon. J. Chuter Ede brought the good wishes of the General Assembly. In an inspiring address Mr. Ede showed how the history of the congregation was intertwined with the history of Manchester. He also reminded the congregation that the new building is not a mausoleum for departed heroes. It was, he said, his earnest hope that "the joy of this latter house shall be greater than the former."

The President of the G.A. had spoken for all present when he prefaced his address with a reference to Dr. Wilde. Mr. Ede said: "Whatever we say is overshadowed by the loss of Dr. Wilde."

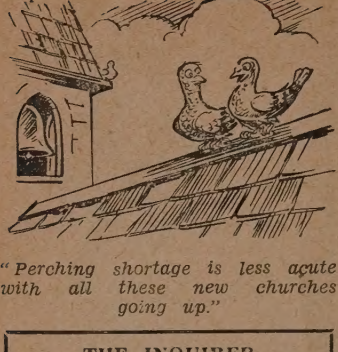
The new building is neo-classical in style. The large room is dual purpose with the chancel capable of being cut off when desired by a deep blue folding screen. A large curtain rises above the communion table.

At the moment the Chapel is open each week-day between ten and four o'clock. It will remain so while the demand for a "look round" persists.

SAVOURY SERMON

"The service in the afternoon was conducted by the Rev. J. H., whose impressive sermon gave much food for thought. After an enjoyable tea a business meeting was held."

—From a report in the "Inquirer" April 4th.



"Perching shortage is less acute with all these new churches going up."

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"I'M NOT RELIGIOUS BUT—"
By Arthur Peacock
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NEWS AND VIEWS

OVERSEAS CHURCHES

A Unitarian Housing Committee has been formed at MINNEAPOLIS "to remove or alleviate housing discrimination by whatever effective means possible." Chairman is the assistant minister, Richard E. Sykes, recently of Manchester College, Oxford. The Church orchestra gives a monthly concert. The lecture-discussion series is considering modern thinkers.

The Rev. G. E. Hale preached at ADELAIDE on March 15th to commemorate the 50th anniversary of his ordination. Mr. Hale is President of the Howard League in Adelaide and active in the Prisoners' Aid Society. He is a frequent exhibitor in art shows (some of Mr. Hale's water-colours are to be seen at Great Hucklow). Mr. Hale's daughter, Una, is now Principal Soprano at Covent Garden.

HOME CHURCHES

An oak pedestal flower stand has been provided by members of CULLOMPTON in memory of their former minister, the late Rev. W. A. Pocock.

Extra publicity is to be obtained at DITCHLING by the addition of new notice boards on sites round the Church.

The Rev. Charles Simpson was the preacher at the Good Friday service in Lye Parish Church. In preparation for the centenary of the opening of the present chapel at LYE in 1961 a centenary fund has been opened. The fund is to meet the cost of extensive repairs and renovations to chapel and schoolroom premises.

Miss Judith Goddard won the competition to be School Queen of the NEW GRAVEL PIT Church, Hackney. Thirteen finalists competed in singing, reciting, sight reading, walking and other tests. Out of a possible 650 marks Judith gained 533. Second was Irene Forino with 532 marks.

The Manchester District Association held its A.G.M. at Cross Street on March 23rd. More than 150 people attended. Devotions were conducted by the Rev. Tom Nuttall. The meeting was addressed by the President of the G.A., the Rt. Hon. J. Chuter Ede. During the meeting an alteration was made in the constitution which will allow certain money to be invested more widely and so with greater profit than in the past. Miss Bass, secretary of Cross Street Chapel, was presented with a bouquet as a token of thanks for her hard work in preparing the Chapel for the meeting.

Unitarians from many parts of England and Wales enjoyed an Easter week-end re-union at Scarborough of those who had participated in the Unitarian Continental tours organised by the Rev. and Mrs. G. W. Parkinson. The party attended Easter morning service at SCARBOROUGH.

One outcome of the A.G.M. at ALTRINCHAM was the proposal for dividing the Parsonage in order to provide a four-bedroom house for the minister, along with two entirely self-contained flats for single people, or married couples. Further details are being considered.

The new cover for the HALE calendar bears a drawing by Mr. S. Bunce. Mr. Bunce is a member of the congregation, and some of his drawings have recently been bought by the Manchester Gallery.

After much discussion of the ethical principles involved GATACRE has decided to have a gift day this year instead of the Christmas Fair. Because of the distraction they cause at a vital point in the Act of Worship the offertory and announcements will take place, for an experimental period, after the first hymn, instead of after the address.

Young people from WALSALL and WEST BROMWICH recently took part in an exhibition called "Time Off." The idea was to advertise to the general public the different activities that go on in the district. A B.B.C. report of the exhibition referred to the stand built by the young people of the two churches to advertise their church youth groups as "most startling."

Northern S.S. Federation
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Silver tea-pots were taken off the shelves of UNITY CHURCH, Sheffield, to help cater for nearly two hundred people who attended the Northern Sunday School Federation meetings held there on Good Friday. The service in the morning was conducted by the Rev. Kenneth Sherratt. At the business meeting Mr. A. Schofield (Denton) became President for the coming year, and Mr. A. Hibbert received a presentation upon his retirement (for business reasons) from the office of treasurer after ten years' service in that capacity. After the sumptuous tea the Rev. E. D. Davies took the chair at a meeting addressed by Mr. Franklyn Johnson and Mr. J. Ratcliffe and the Rev. Alec Finbow on the subject of the future of the Federation.

Although there were only three plays in this year's U.Y.P.L. Drama Festival at Dob Lane an entertain-

ing time was had by audience and actors. Liverpool, MILL STREET, retained the Shield with a fine performance of "Calling the Tune." Mr. Norman Pickles, the adjudicator, placed them well ahead of Swinton (second) and Stalybridge (third). The universally popular Miss Alice Crombie (at present under voluntary exile in Solihull) presented the Shield, and amidst the loudest applause of the evening received an immense bouquet.

The Women's League has restarted at CHELTENHAM. Discussion groups are being held fortnightly under the general theme "A Mission to Ourselves."

Gifts were presented to Mrs. M. R. Dicken at CREWKERNE A.G.M. as an appreciation of her work for the Chapel as Lay Pastor.

Mrs. Whitaker and Mrs. Jenkins sang excerpts from Greig's "Peer Gynt" to illustrate the minister's talk on Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" to the Women's League at SIDMOUTH.

A Unitarian Advance Campaign began at TROWBRIDGE on Easter Sunday. The Youth Club did well in a recent one-act Drama Festival.

At the Manchester District Sunday School Association A.G.M. Rev. Glyn Pruce was elected President.

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UNITARIANS IN THE NEWS

Mr. H. Hewerdine, Chairman of Cross Street Chapel, is President of the National Federation of Master Plumbers and Domestic Engineers (Employers). His term of office ends in June.

Rev. A. B. Downing, M.A., B.D. has been elected to the Convocation of Manchester University.

On May 3rd, Dr. Jeremy Goring begins a lay ministry at Lewisham. He will be publicly welcomed on Saturday, May 9th.

Mr. C. Pollitt, of Stockport, was 90 in January. His most acceptable present was the restoration, by operation, of his eyesight.

A PRELIMINARY NOTICE

The opening and dedication of the new Church at Wythenshawe will take place on Saturday, June 6th, 1959. The REV. A. W. VALLANCE, President of the General Assembly will officiate.

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